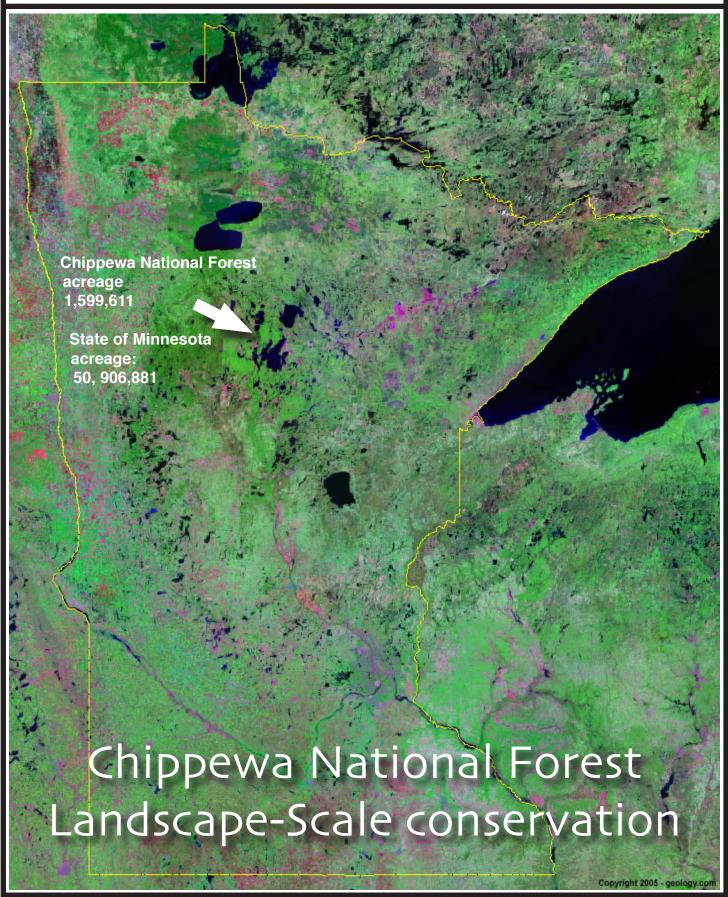
Annual Report



2009



A Note From The Chief



Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell

Before Gifford Pinchot, there were no working forests as we know them today. Yet Pinchot still understood the critical importance of forest conservation for the future of our country. Today's forests.... in wilderness areas, in roadless areas, and in working landscapes---it takes all of them together to meet the needs of our nation.

We can work toward a shared vision based on healthy, flourishing ecosystems—ecosystems that can provide all the services that Americans want and need while creating jobs and local economic opportunities, supporting communities of all kinds. The vision is based on mutual respect. I believe that Americans who love their forests can coalesce around the common goal of ecological restoration. Under my leadership, the Forest Service will focus on that goal.

By ecological restoration, we mean restoring the ecological functions associated with healthy forests ecosystems—systems that remain resilient under drought conditions, despite assault by fire, insects, and disease. Partnerships are the cornerstone of ecological restoration. Restoring forests means bringing people together, pooling resources, and working across borders and boundaries. The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests, not just the national forests. Working with partners, the Forest Service will take an all-lands approach that goes beyond the National Forest System. Under my leadership, we will focus on *landscape scale conservation*.

We cannot sustain the nation's forests by focusing just on the national forests. Fifty-seven percent of America's forests are in private land ownership and another 23 percent are in state, tribal, county, municipal, and other federal ownerships. Forest ecosystems typically form mosaics—mosaics of plant and animal communities and mosaics of landownership.

Under my leadership, our focus on restoration will be closely tied to our focus on landscapescale conservation. Especially in an era of climate change, we need to restore the resilience of America's forests to disturbances of all kinds. The treatments needed will improve watershed health, increase water quantity, improve water quality, build community prosperity and meet our shared vision of healthy sustainable forests.

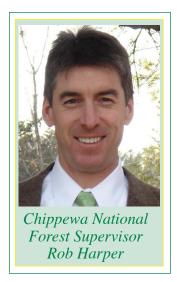
"For the greatest good." I believe the goal of forest restoration through an all-lands approach, through landscape-scale conservation, captures the spirit of "the greatest good." Americans from all walks of life who care about their forest can come together behind that goal, in that same American spirit of working toward something greater than ourselves, for the greater good.

Tom Tidwell, Forest Service Chief October 2009: Taken from a Speech to Society of American Foresters

Talking with the Forest Supervisor

Welcome to the Chippewa National Forest – the first National Forest east on the Mississippi River and the only National Forest whose borders are shared with an Indian Reservation – the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. The Chippewa National Forest is a unique and special place and we are looking ahead to an exciting year. Let me share with you some new developments for this coming year. We have all been affected by the economic downturn and the delivery of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects is the top priority for all units in the Forest Service. The scrutiny and oversight associated with these projects will be considerable and the stakes are high. We will meet our commitments in Recovery Act projects.

The Recovery Act provides the Chippewa National Forest with an exceptional opportunity to create jobs in our communities while implementing projects to benefit the land and reduce our long term



maintenance costs. In recent years, we have seen changes in focus and new demands with only partial or inadequate funding. This is a very different situation—we are being asked to do more with more. Many of the projects we will be implementing would probably never have seen the light of day without the Recovery Act and it is important for us to seize this moment.

Over the next year, the Chippewa National Forest will be coordinating with a new fire crew from the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, implementing trails work with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota, replacing bunkhouses at Deer River and Blackduck. We will be performing much needed maintenance on roads within and accessing the research forests for the Northern research Station, replacing old outhouses, and restoring historic Camp Rabideau. What wonderful investments. Thanks for your energies and engagement. It's going to be an exciting year!

This past year, the Forest harvested ash seeds, grew elm trees, and grew important partnerships. Our agreements and opportunities to work with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe increased. We also saw firsthand at Camp Rabideau how our programs enhanced USDA goals for healthy families and local foods. Read more about these programs in this Annual Report.

We have the advice of 15 interested citizens who have been selected for the Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) for our Minnesota Forests. Their expertise and concern will lead us in implementing projects through the Secure Rural Schools Act.

Expect to see the construction of a new ranger district office in the community of Walker. Not only will this project bring new construction work to the city of Walker, it will result in improved public service. Visitors can expect a more welcoming facility, and a facility that jointly hosts Forest Service employees, and the Walker Chamber of Commerce. Thereby providing better service to the thousands of visitors that travel to this wonderful area every year.

Enjoy Your National Forest!

Rob Harper Chippewa National Forest Supervisor

Recovery and Reinvestment Act



Aquatic Fish Passage

- \$200,000 (CIM 0903/0909-8EW-234-0903-01)
- Forestwide Aquatic Fish Passage. Improve watershed conditions within Upper Mississippi.



Bunkhouse Replacement

- \$500.000 (CIM 0900-3F-15-0903-01)
- Remove five older buildings and replace with two energy efficient facilities to be used for temporary workforce bunkhouses.



- Lift Pump at Norway Beach \$46,000 (CIM 0900-4F-187-0903-01)
- · Replace pump, piping, electrical panel and install a monitoring device for the heavily used Norway Beach Recreation Area sewer treatment facility.



Environmental Compliance

- (CIM-0900-6F)
- HazMat coordinators on each National Forest will analyze the current state of the HazMat program.



Experimental Forest

- \$862,526 (CIM-2423-02R-NRS-0903-01,03)
- Road Maintenance/replacement of structures on three water crossings that pose issues to Aquatic Organism Passage in Experimental Forest.



Firefighters

- \$111,000 (WFM-0900-9-HFR-724-0903-01)
- Fire protection on tribal lands and fire management activities. Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe will train 10 employees to assist firefighting activities.



Forest Highway 57 Reconstruction • \$1,315,000 (CIM-0900-2R-354-0903-01)

- · Road will be realigned for safer vehicle travel and access for recreation users, local residents, tribal neighborhoods, summer camps and resorts.

Recovery and Reinvestment Act



Motorized Use Signing • \$106,881 (CIM-0900-4R-743-0903-01,03,04,05)

Upgrade regulatory signs to new retroreflectivity requirements. Signing includes rail crossing, travel management, boat access, hunter walking trails and forest information signs.



Pigeon River Impoundment

\$161.871 (CIM-09 3/0909-8EW-268-0903-01.02)

 Construct an escapement channel through the Pigeon River impoundment for passage of spawning fish. Improve health of Lake Winnie watershed.



Rabideau Stabilization

\$1,480,437 (CIM-0900-2f-78-0903-01,02,03)

 Improvements to allow youth to reuse the Camp similar to its original purpose of providing employment and natural resource work experience.



Restroom Replacement

\$242,600 (CIM-0900-3F-180-0909-03)

 Replace nine vault toilets located at boat ramps, fishing access points, campgrounds, Camp Rabideau and Shingobee Recreation Area.



Trail Maintenance

\$131,000 (CIM-0901-1T-508-0903-01,02,03)

Maintain 108 miles of trails across the Forest. Conservation Corps of Minnesota will construct five miles of trail in the North Winnie Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized Area.



Walker Culverts

\$186,810 (CIM-0903/0909-8EW-224-0903-01,02,03)

Replacement of culverts that prevent upstream migration for aquatic organisms at road crossings. Improve overall health of the watershed.



Wastewater Consultant

Review or develop an Operations and Management manual for Wastewater.



Database Entry Assistance

Map and Measure trails for inclusion in a national database.

Visit www.Recovery.gov for more information. Use CIM number to track projects.

Payments to Counties

On October 3, 2008, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 was reauthorized as part of Public Law 11-343. The new Secure Rural Schools (SRS) Act has some significant changes. To implement the new law, the Forest Service requested states and counties to elect either to receive a share of the 25-percent rolling average payment or to receive a share of the Secure Rural Schools State (formula) payment. A county electing to receive a share of the State payment was requested to allocate between 15-20 percent of its share for one or more of the following purposes: projects under Title II of the Act; projects under Title III; or the Treasurer of the United States (county allocation). All three counties overlaying the Chippewa National Forest have allocated funds to Title II. A Resource Advisory Committee was nominated in 2009 and will begin operations in 2010 to recommend use of these funds to the National Forest.

Seven counties in Minnesota received a total of \$12,496,515 from the Forest Service in 2009. Thye-Blatnik numbers apply to Superior National Forest wilderness only. In 2009, the BWCAW boundary was reappraised, raising Thye-Blatnik payments. Counties on the Chippewa National Forest received \$2,240,639.

	SUPERIOR	PILT	SRS	Thye-Blatnik	TOTAL
	Cook	\$208,736	\$762,132	\$2,025,000	\$2,995,868
	Koochichir	ng \$9,681	\$104	0	\$9,785
	Lake	\$237,409	\$745,795	\$2,512,500	\$3,495,704
	St. Louis	\$1,347,701	\$794,318	\$1,612,500	\$ 3,754,519
37					
	CHIPPEWA	PILT	SRS	Thye-Blatnik	TOTAL
	Cass	\$351,449	\$548,886	NA	\$900,335
,	Itasca	\$381,964	\$692,596	NA	\$1,074,560
	Beltrami	\$116,625	\$149,119	NA	\$265,744

2009 Accomplishments

TIMBER Harvested (Million Board Feet)	WILDLIFE Terrestrial Habitat Restored/Enhanced (Acres)
HUMAN RESOURCES Senior Employment	LANDS Right-Of-Way Cases
FIRE and FUELS Prescribed Burns (#Fires/Acres)	ROADS AND TRAILS Road Maintenance (Miles)
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Discover the Edge of the Wilderness!

In 2005, an idea to create a destination point for travelers along the Highway 38 National Scenic Byway between Grand Rapids and Bigfork, Minnesota began to brew. The site would meet the needs of both Byway visitors and area residents, providing natural resource education, interpretation, and customer service. Tucked along the scenic highway, in the far northeast corner of the Chippewa National Forest, was the community of Marcell.

Four years later, on a beautiful September day, the Edge Of The Wilderness Discovery Center celebrated its Grand Opening to the applause of an appreciative community, four key partnership groups and Congressman Jim Oberstar.

September 2009 marked the culmination of four years of partnership work, grant writing and agreements between the Forest Service and Itasca County, Northern Itasca Joint Powers Board, Highway 38 Leadership Board and the Edge of the Wilderness Lodging Association. Their work transformed an outdated ranger station into a welcoming information and education center that focuses on diverse ecosystems and history.



Congressman Jim Oberstar at Grand Opening

Visitors are greeted by interpretive displays that reflect the blue tones of clear deep lakes and the dark greens of the boreal forest. "Welcome to the Edge of the Wilderness" is echoed in the birch and pine tree panels and warm greetings from Discovery Center staff. Since it opened in June 2009, the Marcell Discovery Center has welcomed over 2500 visitors. In November, Discovery Center partners received a Region 9 Honor Award for their work with the Center.



Lady Slipper Scenic Byway

The Chippewa National Forest developed a partnership with local citizens to mitigate and reduce impacts of a highway upgrade along 15 miles of the Lady Slipper Scenic Highway. The highway upgrade is necessary to improve safety and travel speed on an important corridor that provides the most direct route to recreational sites and businesses between U.S. Hwy. 2 and Blackduck, Minnesota.

The major objective of the partnership is to ensure that a population of several thousand Showy Lady's Slippers, the state flower of Minnesota, are not irreparably damaged or eliminated during the highway upgrade. The Pennington Orchid bog along this route is one of the most prolific producers of orchids in the upper Midwest.

A citizen's Scenic Byway Committee worked with local governments and landowners to provide education resources about the highway upgrade and the possible impact to the orchids. The partnership matches the resource mapping and ecological skills of the Forest Service, with the enthusiasm of local

citizens. The Forest Service provided the GPS tools and personnel necessary to conduct flower location surveys, making maps of major orchid colonies along the highway.

An Environmental Assessment for the project was completed in 2006, and the Highway Department will complete work in four stages. Site preparation for the first stage began in the summer 2009, with vegetation clearing to "Natural Preservation Route" specifications. It will be impossible for the construction to be done without disturbing many of the lady slipper colonies, but the Byway Leadership Board hopes to maintain a nearly uninterrupted presence of showy lady slippers along the highway. Lady slipper colonies will be mapped with GPS coordinates and moved to a temporary location before the site preparation is done for each stage of the project. This location will have similar habitat qualities to their present locations. When the construction is finished, lady slippers will then be returned to the locations from which they were taken.

Ash Seed and Elm Pollen



A summer spent poking into tree branches and gathering tiny seeds may not sound ideal, but the work is crucial to prepare for the possible destruction of Minnesota's ash trees from Emerald Ash Borer (EAB).

Chippewa National Forest crews are contributing to a University of Minnesota ash seed collection effort to proactively protect the genetic diversity of ash before arrival of the nonnative invasive Emerald Ash Borer. At risk in Minnesota are nearly 1 billion trees, roughly 6.4 percent of Minnesota's urban and wild forest. The Forest is coordinating this effort with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.

The idea is to collect seeds of the at-risk ash trees and store them for 20 years, buying time to find a solution to EAB. Once entomologists figure out a way to control emerald ash borer, species can be reintroduced where they historically existed. EAB was discovered in 2002, and foresters have known that the insect would eventually make its way to Minnesota.

Seed gathering has a new urgency.
In May 2009, EAB was found in St. Paul and 68 trees were quickly removed. Foresters are waiting to see if EAB turns up in the spring of 2010 when larvae burrow out of trees.

By collecting hundreds of seeds from each sample tree, researchers believe they should be able to meet demand from nurseries. Researchers will plant those ash trees over the next two decades.

Each seed holds the DNA, and if enough seeds are collected, researchers have a good representation of the genetic variation for that species. Members of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe have become key contributors to the project. Ash is prized for its flexibility in basket-making. Seeds that Band members collect will be stored and returned to the Tribe. Leech Lake Reservation includes 22,000 acres of forest, about one-third of it ash.

After cleaning and sorting, the collected seeds are sent to the National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS), a Department of Agriculture network of repositories established more than a century ago. Seed samples of wild and domestic plant species from around the world are stored here. A small sample of ash seed will be sent to the National Center for Genetic Resources Preservation in Fort Collins, Colorado.

The collection and preservation effort may allow science to help the ash tree, keeping it from the same fate as the American chestnut and American elm, which were nearly wiped out by non-native fungi. Disease resistant elms are beginning to come back after about 40 years, but it has taken a century for disease-resistant chestnuts to get a hopeful start. Imagine what a difference a seed store would have made for the American chestnut, or elm. Crews will continue ash seed collection in 2010—seems like a great way to spend the summer.



Ash seed collection on Chippewa National Forest

Elm Update

In 2009, 521 American elms were planted in three separate locations on the Forest as part of a 6-year project to produce Dutch-Elm-Disease resistant elms. An additional 200 trees will be planted in spring of 2010.



Prescribed Fire

Since the 1970's, Chippewa National Forest fire crews have completed annual prescribed burning projects. Favorable weather conditions in 2009 combined with firefighter expertise led to 15 separate days of prescribed burning in upland pine sites, lowland meadows, and upland openings throughout the Chippewa National Forest. During the 2009 season, a total of 2,348 acres of prescribed fire were completed on the Chippewa National Forest.

In addition to prescribed burn accomplishments, mechanical fuels treatments occurred on 15 different sites for a total of 490 acres. This included piling of downed woody



debris with dozers, hand-cutting and piling of brush, dozer lines (or discing) of control lines for burn units, chipping treatment of slash piles (biomass), and chainsaw work. The fire crews also completed prep work on three upcoming prescribed fires sites.

While these activities are occurring, many members of the fire team are also involved with preparing new agreements for partnership opportunities, consulting with other prescribed fire partners, and assisting with national fire suppression efforts. Prescribed burning programs are worked on cooperatively with Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Minnesota DNR Forestry, county land offices and private landowners.

Fire Protection Partnerships



Chippewa National Forest and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe currectly have agreements to provide fire protection on tribal lands.

The Firefighter project has two phases. LLBO will train 10 employees to assist Forest firefighters and participate in fuel management activities.

The Recovery Act provides 1-2 years of employment for up to 5 people, and a possible career in fire or natural resource management. Crews receive training and experience necessary to participate on casual fire crews and be more successful at competing for fire/fuels management jobs in Federal and State agencies.

The Chippewa National Forest and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe frequently establish formal agreements to accomplish work. Of 46 total executed agreements in 2009, 16 are with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. We have begun working with the LLBO Temporary Employment Program – this accounted for the 7 of the 16 agreements. Other important agreements signed with the LLBO were for the Ball Club Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project (in the amount of \$300,000), a wildlife impoundment maintenance agreement in the amount of \$115, 000.00, and a new illegal dump-clean up agreement in the amount of \$32,000.

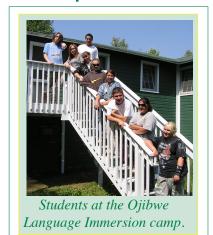


Boozhoo! Cultural Landscapes

Campers at the Norway Beach Visitor Center are always greeted with a friendly smile and hello, but this year, they received an extra "boozhoo" as they walked through the door. Visitor Center Naturalist Kelcie Bouchonville and Tribal College Student Brenda Fairbanks added a little Ojibwe language to everyone's day.

The Chippewa National Forest shares boundaries with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, and it made sense to add Ojibwe language to the programs. When the Forest presented animal programs to the kids in Cass Lake, they quickly taught us the names of the critters, in Ojibwe.

Every Thursday morning, Brenda or Kelcie would present a short 20-minute Ojibwe language lesson, teaching greetings, animals and pronounciations in Ojibwe. The programs will only continue to grow, thanks to Leech Lake Tribal College's STEM (Science, Technology,



Environment, Math) program. Two other STEM students were hired on the Forest in 2009, working in recreation both in the field and with the District office.

Language programs were also offered at Camp Rabideau, through a partnership with Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. Students participated in a two-day language immersion camp. Similar programs will be planned for 2010. The Forest also partnered with the Bemidji Chamber of Commerce to provide visitor information signs in both Ojibwe and English. As the seasons change, we see that this wonderful language component has added a cultural education link to visitor programs. The Forest will continue to build programs and community partnerships. Migwetch to all our partners and students who helped move this program forward.



Traveling Fish

The Pigeon River Fish Passage is one of fifteen Recovery Act projects on the Chippewa National Forest. This project is being done in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), Midwest Glacial Lakes and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.

The Pigeon River Fish Passage project will improve the overall health of the Lake Winnie watershed by providing passage for all aquatic organisms, including northern pike and yellow perch. Biologists hope to build long-term sustainability for natural spawning and improve hydrologic connections linking Lake Winnie to Upper, Middle and Lower Pigeon Lakes. This is an

area of broad federal ownership, adjacent to a semi-primitive non-motorized area. The opportunity to improve and maintain watershed health here is good.

The USFS and partners will construct an escapement channel through the Pigeon Lake impoundment. The channel will be approximately 300 feet long and will be designed to allow passage of aquatic organisms.

The Pigeon River impoundment is one of 53 impoundments on the Chippewa National Forest. Creating impoundments was once considered a good habitat practice for declining waterfowl populations. Today, there is more understanding of the value of maintaining wetlands for their natural functions. Recently the Forest made a five year agreement with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe for maintenance of these structures.

Camp Rabideau Rises to Modern Day Challenge

Camp Rabideau operated as a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp from 1935-1942, under President Roosevelt's New Deal program. Camp Rabideau is now a National Historic Landmark, representing the best preserved CCC camp in the nation.

Today, Camp Rabideau is again rising to meet a modern day challenge. The CCC camp will provide work and education to young adults through conservation-based service learning projects. This new project is called Rabideau Conservation Academy and Learning Center.

The 2008 pilot Conservation Academy and Learning Center endeavor was funded though grants from the Initiative and Blandin Foundations, along with partnerships with Bois Forte Band of Chippewa and the Minnesota Workforce Center through Workforce Investment Act funding.

The first youth group to overnight at Camp Rabideau since the 1930's were 33 youth and 8 adults conducting a week-long Ojibwe language immersion program while learning traditional cultural practices. Each day was filled with language classes, Indian art, fishing, canoeing,

water safety, and traditional Indian cooking. The experience was such a success that the camp leaders plan to use it as a model for the future. The Camp Rabideau coordinator noted that Bois Forte was the location of Minnesota's first CCC Indian Development project of that era.

Later in the summer, more than a dozen youth workers accomplished a variety of maintenance projects at the CCC camp. For six weeks, the crew scraped and painted the buildings, stained the fishing pier, excavated an old CCC building foundation, and performed simple carpentry tasks. Off-site projects included maintenance at Benjamin Lake, assisting with GPS and mapping of showy lady slippers along the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway and trail work at Webster Lake. The youth were delighted to "star" in a Lakeland Public TV news clip about the youth work and Camp Rabideau.

The future will only get brighter for Camp Rabideau. In 2009, additional funding for restoration of key buildings came from the Recovery Act. Work will begin on the Recreation Hall and Mess Hall in 2010.



(right) Work crew at Camp Rabideau

2009 Annual Report

Forest Events Schedule

January National Winter Trails Day

February Candlelight Ski (Cut Foot); Shingobee Hills Family Days

March Career Fairs, Chippewa National Forest and

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

April Earth Day; Arbor Day; National Fire Prevention Week

May Celebrating Wildflowers, International Migratory Bird Week;

Fishing Opener; Visitor Center Open

June National Public Lands Day; Chippewa Triathlon;

National Fishing & Boating Week Bald Eagle Day (Visitor Centers)

August Smokey Bear's Birthday
September National Public Lands Day

September National Public Lands Day October Howl O Ween at Shingobee

November Deer Hunting Season! Get your maps at

Forest Service Offices.

December Christmas tree permits available.

Get to know your pines and spruces!

Visitors Centers open in late May through Labor Day. Check website for updated program listings and special events.



The Prides celebrate Smokey's Birthday at Norway Beach.



-For additional information, complete and return the information request form —

Additional Information FIRE **RECREATION** NATURAL RESOURCES ☐ Firewise Program ☐ Camping ☐ Eagle Viewing ☐ Smokey Bear Coloring Book ☐ Bird Checklist ☐ Native Wildflowers MORE KIDS IN THE WOODS ☐ Hiking ☐ Emerald Ash Borer ☐ Junior Ranger Program ☐ Canoeing ☐ Aquatic Invasives ☐ Visitor Center Schedule ☐ OHV & Motor Vehicle ☐ Elm Trees MAPS: ☐ Forest Rec Map ☐ Forest Base Map ☐ Forest Mini Map ☐ Quad Maps Name: _ Address:-CHIPPEWA NATIONAL FOREST City: _ 200 Ash Avenue NW Cass Lake, MN 56633 State: _ (218)335-8600 www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/chippewa E-Mail: ____



July

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